

**MINIMUM DATA SET (MDS) NATIONAL AUTOMATION PROJECT**

**LONG TERM CARE FACILITY USER'S MANUAL (LTC)**

**VERSION 7.1**



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**Prepared for**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THIS MANUAL .....	2
HOW THIS MANUAL IS ORGANIZED .....	2
CONVENTIONS USED IN THIS MANUAL .....	3

### SECTION 2 OVERVIEW

INTRODUCING THE MDS SYSTEM.....	2
WHAT HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE IS REQUIRED .....	3
WHAT TRAINING IS RECOMMENDED .....	4

### SECTION 3 SYSTEM FUNCTIONS

ESTABLISHING THE COMMUNICATION CONNECTION .....	2
Dial-in Instructions .....	2
Accessing the MDS System .....	4
SUBMITTING MDS DATA FILES .....	8
INITIAL FEEDBACK REPORT AND FINAL VALIDATION REPORT .....	12
Initial Feedback Report .....	12
Final Validation Report .....	14

### SECTION 4 REPORTS

GENERAL INFORMATION .....	2
REPORT BASICS .....	3
CASPER REPORTS ONLINE REPORT DESCRIPTIONS	
MDS Online Admission/Reentries Report .....	4
MDS Online Discharges Report .....	5
Duplicate Resident Report .....	6
Errors by Field by Facility Report .....	7
Error Summary by Facility Report .....	8
Error Message Report .....	9
Facility List Report .....	9
MDS Facility List--Last Production Submission Report .....	10
Roster Report .....	11
Daily Submission Statistics Report .....	12

---

## SECTION 4        REPORTS (CONTINUED)

Monthly Submission Statistics Report .....	13
Submission Statistics by Facility Report .....	14
Vendor List Report .....	15
Vendor List of Current Facilities Report .....	16
RFA Statistics by Facility Report .....	17
Errors by Facility by Vendor Report .....	18
SCHEDULED REPORTS	
Accessing Scheduled Reports .....	19
SCHEDULED REPORT DESCRIPTIONS	
End of Month Roster Report .....	22
Resident Discharged Without Return .....	23
MDS Activity Report .....	24
MDS New Admission Report .....	25
MDS Residents with Changes to Resident Identifiers Report .....	26
MDS Questionable New Resident Report .....	27
MDS Missing Assessment Report .....	28
Monthly Quality Indicator Comparison Report .....	29

## SECTION 5        TROUBLESHOOTING

SYSTEM ERROR MESSAGES .....	2
TROUBLESHOOTING .....	2

## SECTION 6        ACRONYMS .....

2

## SECTION 7        INDEX .....

2

## APPENDIX A       MDS TUTORIAL .....

2

APPENDIX B	CASPER REPORTING SYSTEM    Section 2	
	Accessing Reports .....	1
	Required Plug-in .....	2
	Log-in Information .....	4
	Requesting Reports .....	6
	Shared Folders .....	10
	Viewing Reports .....	11
	Printing, Saving, and Exporting Reports .....	13
	Customizing the CASPER Reporting Tool .....	16
	PSR Viewer for Internet Explorer Users .....	23

---

## LIST OF FIGURES

### SECTION 2

Figure 2-1. Overview of the MDS System Architecture .....	3
-----------------------------------------------------------	---

### SECTION 3

Figure 3-1. Dialer Window .....	2
Figure 3-2. Network View .....	3
Figure 3-3. CMS Links Page .....	4
Figure 3-4. CMS MDS Welcome Page .....	5
Figure 3-5. Username and Password Window .....	6
Figure 3-6. CMS MDS Main Menu .....	7
Figure 3-7. MDS File Submission Window .....	8
Figure 3-8. File Source Window .....	9
Figure 3-9. Send Confirmation Window .....	10
Figure 3-10. File Transmission Error .....	11
Figure 3-11. Initial Feedback Report .....	12
Figure 3-12. Final Validation Report .....	14
Figure 3-13. Validation Report Listing Window .....	15

### SECTION 4

Figure 4-1. Saving Scheduled Reports .....	3
Figure 4-2. MDS Online Admission/Reentries Report .....	4
Figure 4-3. MDS Online Discharges .....	5
Figure 4-4. Duplicate Resident Report .....	6
Figure 4-5. Errors by Field by Facility .....	7
Figure 4-6. Errors Summary Report by Facility .....	8
Figure 4-7. Error Message Report .....	9
Figure 4-8. Facility List Report .....	9

---

## LIST OF FIGURES (CONTINUED)

### SECTION 4 (CONTINUED)

Figure 4-9. Facility List--Last Production Submission Report .....	10
Figure 4-10. Roster Report .....	11
Figure 4-11. Daily Submission Statistics Report .....	12
Figure 4-12. Monthly Submission Statistics Report .....	13
Figure 4-13. Submission Statistics by Facility Report .....	14
Figure 4-14. Vendor List Report .....	15
Figure 4-15. Vendor List of Current Facilities Report .....	16
Figure 4-16. RFA Statistics by Facility Report .....	17
Figure 4-17. Errors by Facility by Vendor Report .....	18
Figure 4-18. CMS MDS Welcome Page .....	19
Figure 4-19. User Name/Password Required to Access MDS Submission Link .....	19
Figure 4-20. CMS MDS Main Menu .....	20
Figure 4-21. List of Available Validation Reports .....	21
Figure 4-22. End of Month Roster Report .....	22
Figure 4-23. Resident Discharged Without Return .....	23
Figure 4-24. MDS Activity Report .....	24
Figure 4-25. MDS New Admission Report .....	25
Figure 4-26. MDS Residents with Changes to Resident Identifiers .....	26
Figure 4-27. MDS Questionable New Resident Report .....	27
Figure 4-28. MDS Missing Assessment Report .....	28
Figure 4-29. Monthly Quality Indicator Comparison Report .....	29

### APPENDIX A

Figure A-1. Dialer Window .....	3
Figure A-2. Network View .....	4
Figure A-3. CMS Links Page .....	5
Figure A-4. Welcome Page .....	5
Figure A-5. Netscape Window .....	6
Figure A-6. CMS MDS Welcome Page .....	8
Figure A-7. Username and Password Window .....	9
Figure A-8. CMS MDS Main Menu .....	10
Figure A-9. MDS File Submission Window .....	11
Figure A-10. File Source Window .....	12
Figure A-11. File Submission Window with File Name .....	13
Figure A-12. Send Confirmation Window .....	14
Figure A-13. Initial Feedback Report .....	15
Figure A-14. CMS MDS Main Menu .....	16
Figure A-15. Validation Report Listing Window .....	17
Figure A-16. Final Validation Report .....	18

## LIST OF TABLES

### SECTION 2

Table 2-1. Hardware/Software Requirements .....	4
-------------------------------------------------	---

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# 1

## INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THIS MANUAL .....	2
HOW THIS MANUAL IS ORGANIZED .....	2
CONVENTIONS USED IN THIS MANUAL .....	3

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## ABOUT THIS MANUAL

This manual provides information and instructions pertaining to the Minimum Data Set (MDS) System for Long Term Care (LTC) facility users who are required to submit MDS data. This system enables you to connect electronically to the appropriate State agency, transmit MDS records, and receive feedback via the system from that agency. This manual is intended to be used as a reference and learning tool for the MDS System.

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## HOW THIS MANUAL IS ORGANIZED

This user's manual is organized into seven sections and one appendix:

- Section 1, **Introduction**, provides general information about this manual, its organization, and document conventions.
- Section 2, **Overview**, introduces the MDS System and describes system requirements (software and hardware) in addition to applicable software training that should be obtained prior to using the system.
- Section 3, **System Functions**, describes the three basic system functions, which include establishing communications connectivity, submitting MDS data, and retrieving the validation reports. This section also provides instructions and procedures for each of the functions.
- Section 4, **Reports**, addresses reports available for facilities. This section provides instructions for viewing the reports as well as a description of each report.
- Section 5, **Troubleshooting**, addresses what to do if you need assistance with the system and includes a list of standard error messages and suggestions for troubleshooting.
- Section 6, **Glossary**, is a glossary of terms used in the manual.
- Section 7, **Index**, is an index to facilitate the use of this manual.
- Appendix A, **MDS Tutorial**, is a tutorial which walks you step-by-step through the basic system functions.
- Appendix B, **Casper Reporting System, Section 2**, describes accessing and requesting online reports.

⇒ *It is recommended that you use the tutorial as a guide when making your first MDS data submission using the MDS System.*

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## CONVENTIONS USED IN THIS MANUAL

This manual uses the following conventions:

### **Bold**

Identifies words, characters, or commands that a user types on a window or key strokes.

### Underlined

Identifies the “title” of a link to another window.

### *Italics*

Identifies directory, path, file, or field names or book titles.

### Point and Click

Point - move the mouse until the tip of the mouse pointer rests on what you want to choose on the window (such as in a field or on specified text)

Click - press and release the left mouse button without moving the mouse to select an item or execute a desired activity (such as going to another window).

### Double Click

Click the left mouse button twice in rapid succession to select a file or execute an activity.

### Right Click

Press and release the right mouse button.

### Icons

Icons for specific software functions are used where applicable and available (e.g., the Netscape Navigator icon).

⇒ *Precedes a note or suggestion to the user.*



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# 2

## OVERVIEW

INTRODUCING THE MDS SYSTEM.....	2
WHAT HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE IS REQUIRED .....	3
WHAT TRAINING IS RECOMMENDED .....	4

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## INTRODUCING THE MDS SYSTEM

The MDS System is one part of the overall MDS National Automation Project. The purpose of this project is to provide computerized storage, access, and analysis of the MDS 2.0 long-term care data on patients in nursing homes across the United States. The MDS System is intended to create a standard, nationwide system for connecting LTC facilities to their respective State agencies for the purpose of electronic interchange of data, reports, and other information. The MDS System provides the following functions:

- Receipt of MDS records from LTC facilities by State agencies
- Authentication and validation of MDS records received from LTC facilities
- Feedback to LTC facilities indicating acknowledgment of the transmission of the data and specifying the status of record validation
- Storage of MDS records in the database repository within the State agency

⇒ *The message that the file was received successfully does not mean that all individual records were received successfully.*

The system was designed to also serve as a means of communicating information (e.g., reports, documents, and notices) between the State agencies and LTC facilities without requiring additional hardware or software. Figure 2-1 provides an overview of the MDS System architecture and illustrates the communication components and database repository. Figure 2-1 also serves to illustrate the flow of MDS data submissions. At each LTC facility, the user will use the MDS System to electronically send MDS data records to the State agency. The information is transmitted via a modem and received at the State communications server where the file is validated to ensure some basic elements conform to the requirements (such as proper format and facility information) while the facility remains online. Once these minimal checks of the file are completed, a message is sent back to the LTC facility and appears on-screen indicating whether the file (referred to as batch submission) has been received successfully or rejected. The user remains online to ensure the submission has been accepted. If the submission passes the initial validation check, then each record is checked for errors or exceptions to the data specifications and a Final Validation Report is generated. The Validation Report Messages and Description Guide describes both the Initial Feedback and Final Validation Reports and how to interpret the various fields in both. The following sections provide checklists for the required software and hardware and recommendations for software training that you, the user, should obtain prior to using the MDS System.

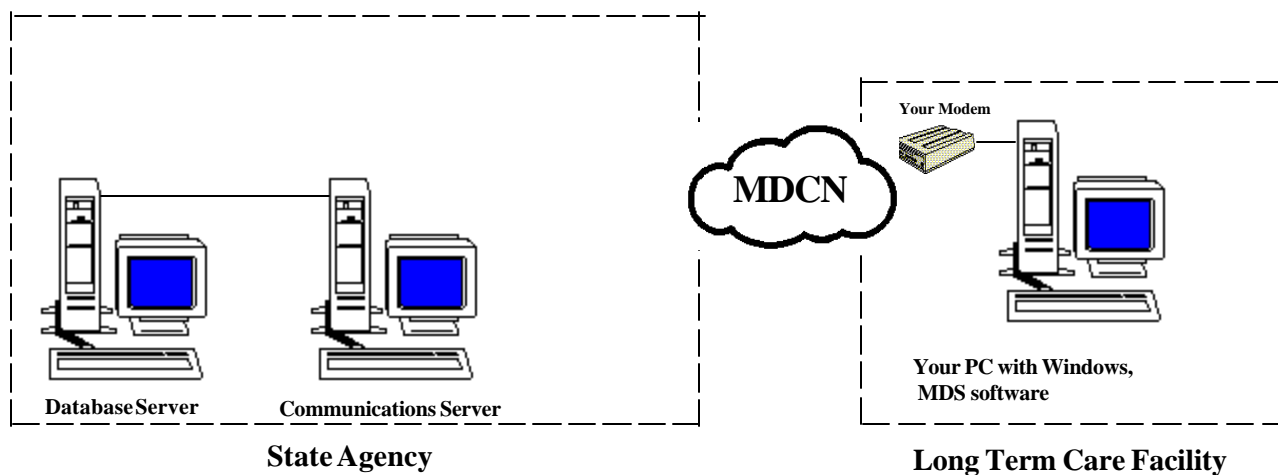


Figure 2-1. Overview of the MDS System Architecture

## WHAT HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE IS REQUIRED

⇒ Long Term Care must be using software capable of encoding MDS records and exporting data files in accordance with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (MDS) standard record layout specifications for version 2.0 of the MDS. IF you have any questions, contact your MDS encoding software vendor.

Table 2-1 lists the minimum hardware and software configurations required to transmit MDS records to the State agency using the MDS System. You should be able to obtain any of the required hardware and software, or information on how to order it, from most computer stores.

⇒ At LTC facilities where a computer network is in use and/or Netscape is currently used, the installation and setup of the MDS System and communication equipment should be coordinated with the assistance of a network administrator and appropriate vendors, as needed.

EQUIPMENT				
REQUIREMENTS FOR WINDOWS 95	REQUIREMENTS FOR WINDOWS 98	REQUIREMENTS FOR WINDOWS NT	REQUIREMENTS FOR WINDOWS 2000	REQUIREMENT FOR WINDOWS XP
Pentium System (minimum) with a CD ROM Drive	Pentium System (minimum) with a CD ROM Drive	Pentium System (minimum) with a CD ROM Drive	133 MHZ or faster Pentium-compatible CPU (minimum) with a CD ROM Drive	PC with 300 megahertz or higher processor clock speed recommended; 233 MHZ minimum require (single or dual processor system with a CD-ROM c DVD drive
16 megs of RAM (minimum)	32 megs of RAM (minimum)	32 megs of RAM (minimum)	64 megs of RAM (minimum)	128 megabytes (MB) of RAM or higher recommended
Netscape Navigator 4.08 128-bit SSL encryption IE (only version 5.5 SP1)	Netscape Navigator 4.08 128-bit SSL encryption IE (only version 5.5 SP1)	Netscape Navigator 4.08 128-bit SSL encryption IE (only version 5.5 SP1)	Netscape Navigator 4.08 128-bit SSL encryption IE (only version 5.5 SP1)	Netscape Navigator 4.08 128-bit SSL encryption IE (only version 5.5 SP1)

Table 2-1. Hardware/Software Requirements

⇒ Having a single telephone line exclusively dedicated to the MDS System is a safeguard against interruptions or breaks in your connection to the State agency.

Should you have difficulty in verifying your existing system hardware and software configuration, contact your facility computer support personnel, the specific hardware and software vendors, or the vendor who has provided you with MDS data encoding software, as appropriate.

## WHAT TRAINING IS RECOMMENDED

⇒ You should receive training from your MDS encoding software vendors in performing data extracts and preparing files for submission prior to using the MDS System. This will help to ensure that your submissions are in the correct format, contain the correct information, and will be accepted into the system.

Whether formal or informal, training in the software applications associated with the MDS System would be helpful. It is recommended that you obtain training in Windows 95/98, or Windows NT and Netscape. Training in these applications can usually be obtained from the software vendor, a local computer store, college or university, or from your MDS software vendor. A basic level of familiarity with these software applications, in addition to the operation of your PC and modem will greatly facilitate the use of the MDS System.

In instances where software manuals or guides are not available, you may check with your local computer store for recommended reference guides. Both Netscape and Windows have online help available to assist you.